



NEWS RELEASE

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January 28, 2010

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“Shred The Word” On Data Privacy Day: State Teaches Consumers How To Dispose Of Personal Information

The California Office of Privacy Protection and the National Association for Information Destruction present an educational webcast for consumers on safe data destruction

SACRAMENTO – Continuing its outreach efforts to educate consumers about how to safely manage their personal information, today the Office of Privacy Protection joined with the National Association for Information Destruction (NAID), to host an online educational seminar on how to dispose of personal data at the end of its lifecycle. Commemorating the second annual California Data Privacy Day, the seminar discussed tips and best practices to get rid of personal data like credit card numbers, tax information, medical records, before selling, donating, or recycling an old computer. The webcast can be viewed [here](#).

“With California’s legacy of being a leader in technical innovation, Chief McNabb knows it is critical to get the word out about how to safely manage personal information,” said Thomas L. Sheehy, Acting Secretary of the California State and Consumer Services Agency. “I applaud her commitment to consumers’ privacy rights.”

Governor Schwarzenegger has kept California at the forefront of data privacy protection and today marks the second time he has proclaimed “California Data Privacy Day.” Well known for having passed landmark legislation to protect consumers’ data, California joins other states and organizations throughout the United States, Canada, and 27 European countries to celebrate the third annual Data Privacy Day, designed to promote understanding of privacy best practices and rights. This year’s participants include businesses like Microsoft and Intel; universities; and the U.S.-based International Association of Privacy Professionals.

"Personal data has a life span of usefulness," said Joanne McNabb, Chief of the California Office of Privacy Protection. "When consumers no longer need records containing personal information, whether it's in paper or digital form, they should destroy and dispose of the information in a secure manner."

COPP has partnered with NAID's California members to "shred the word" statewide with a calendar of free community shred days throughout the state and throughout the year. The calendar can be found on COPP's Web site, privacy.ca.gov, and will be updated as new shred events are added in 2010.

Just as paper documents containing personal information need to be destroyed with a home cross-cut shredder or at a community shred event, sensitive digital data also needs special attention. When it is time to upgrade to a new computer, consumers can opt to sell, donate or recycle their old ones. To keep financial, medical and other sensitive data, like credit card numbers, passwords and tax information, private, all data on the computer's hard drive must be completely erased, using one of three methods.

1. Use overwrite software to **erase** your hard drive.

If a consumer chooses to donate his or her computer to a school or charity, or if it's going to be resold, the hard drive can be erased with overwrite software. Software-based data destruction uses a special application to write patterns of meaningless data onto the hard drive.

2. **Destroy** your hard drive.

If a consumer decides to throw away an old computer, he or she may decide to physically destroy the hard drive. This can be done at home with a sledge hammer or many shredding companies have the equipment to tear apart hard drives, rendering them useless.

3. Bring your computer to an e-waste **recycling** facility.

Computers and other electronic equipment contain reusable materials, some of them

GOVERNOR SCHWARZENEGGER PROCLAIMS JANUARY 28, 2010 "CALIFORNIA DATA PRIVACY DAY"

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hazardous. California consumers can find a facility equipped to recycle electronic waste (known as e-waste) by using a database maintained by the California Integrated Waste Management Board at eRecycle.org. Go to www.e-recycle.org/search.asp to find a recycler in your area.

For more information about protecting your privacy, visit www.privacy.ca.gov or call the California Office of Privacy Protection's toll free number, 1-866-785-9663.

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